Met Office

NEWS

Improving picture, but more snow and ice to come

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After the extreme weather many of us have seen recently many will see conditions ease a little through the next few days.

We have seen large snowfall amounts in many places across the country over the last few days with strong winds causing blizzard conditions and drifting snow resulting in some large snow depths. Drumalbin in Lanarkshire and St Athan in South Glamorgan have recorded snow depths of 50cms. A new March temperature record was set Tredegar in Wales, which did not get above -4.7 all day on March 1st, beating the previous record of -4.6 set in 2001 at Cassley in Sutherland.

Although the weather emphasis is now shifting from snow to ice in southern areas, elsewhere we are still expecting to see further snowfall. However, this will be lighter than recent days. There are still yellow warnings in place for snow, snow and ice and wind covering large parts of the UK and these will be updated over the coming days as needed.

The heaviest snow is most likely in parts of Wales, across the Midlands and into East Anglia and south east England where up to 5-10cms is possible in places. The risk of freezing rain continues at times in the southwest.

Met Office Chief Meteotrologist, Paul Gundersen, said; "It will remain very cold in many places today but temperatures will slowly increase from the south, generally up to around 4 or 5C quite widely by the end of the weekend and we could even see up to 9C to 10C in southern areas. It will remain coldest in the east of the country and over the deepest snow cover.

"As we head into next week there is likely to be more of a north-south split in weather conditions. There will continue to be a risk of rain, sleet and snow at times. The less cold air means there will be a gradual thaw, but this will freeze again overnight so ice is likely be an additional overnight hazard together with low cloud and fog. Colder conditions will continue in the north, with snow showers, although less heavy and less frequent than of late."

Meanwhile, a Level 3 cold weather alert is in force for all of England for the coming days. These alerts are issued in association with Public Health England (PHE) for England only and are not a part of the NSWWS service. These alerts are triggered based on PHE defined thresholds of when severe cold weather is likely to significantly affect people's health.

Dr Thomas Waite, a Consultant in Health Protection at Public Health England, said: “Weather like this is extremely rare in this country – and it brings very real risks to health. Those with heart and lung conditions, the over 65s and young children may struggle to cope in conditions like these and even the fit and well may feel the ill effects of this exceptional weather. Although the weather will vary from place to place staying warm will help keep you well.

"Our advice is heat homes to at least 18C, to keep a close eye on weather forecasts and plan your day around them and think if there are people that you're able to check up on, please do."

Highways England's Head of Road Safety, Richard Leonard, said: "If you need to travel in the morning, make sure you keep your distance and reduce your speed because, even in conditions that seem normal and when the snow is not settling, it can be slippery if ice patches have formed, or where fresh salt has not been worked into the carriageway.

"Drivers should continue to plan their journeys, monitor weather reports and pack a blankets, food, water and a shovel if they really need to travel."

Looking ahead through the weekend and into the following week, the cold weather is expected to remain in place in the north with further snow showers for some. Further south it should turn less cold with a slow thaw, but lying snow and ice continue to be a hazard.

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